AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An answering system, comprising:

a database of back-end customer for storing a plurality of records of back-end customers, each record including a reply address;

an exchange electrically coupled to a PSTN and being adapted to receive a plurality of calls from the PSTN simultaneously, each call being corresponding to one of the back-end customers;

a plurality of terminals;

a recording device;

a data bus electrically coupled to the database of back-end ~~customer~~ customers, the exchange, the terminals, and the recording device respectively; and

a host electrically coupled to the data bus and comprising an ~~on duty~~ on-duty shift list of a plurality of operators operating the terminals;

wherein in response to the exchange receiving a call from a front-end customer ~~by the exchange~~, the host dispatches the call to one of the terminals based on the ~~on duty~~ on-duty shift list so that the operator operating the dispatched terminal can converse with the front-end customer, the recording device is commanded to record the conversation as a voice file and generate an associated index, the host further searches the database of back-end ~~customer~~ customers for finding a reply address of a back-end customer to which the call ~~being corresponding~~ corresponds, and the host sends a reply message associated with the associated index to the replay address of the corresponding back-end customer ~~subject to the reply address~~, and

wherein the host further comprises an identification table containing a plurality of records of usernames and passwords associated with the back-end customers so that in response to receipt by the exchange of a call from one of the back-end customers to listen to said voice file recorded by the recording device, the call from said one of the back-end customers including an input password and index associated with the voice file, the host compares the input password and the password in the identification table to determine whether the back-end customer is authorized to listen the corresponding voice file of said one of the back-end customers in the recording device and yes, the host searches the corresponding voice file in the recording device based on the associated index and then sends the corresponding voice file to the back-end customer.

2. (Original) The answering system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reply address of the corresponding back-end customer is a telephone number.

3. (Currently Amended) The answering system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the reply message for the corresponding back-end customer is a short message and the telephone number is the telephone number of a ~~cellar~~ cellular phone for receiving the short message.

4. (Original) The answering system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reply message is an e-mail and the reply address of the corresponding back-end customer is an e-mail address.

5. (Currently Amended) The answering system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a database of front-end ~~customer~~ customers electrically coupled to the data bus and being adapted to store a plurality of records of front-end customers each having a telephone number, wherein the exchange is further operable to fetch the telephone number of the front-end customer who initiates the call, the host compares the telephone number of the front-end customer with a plurality of telephone numbers of the records stored in the database of front-end customer for finding a corresponding record of the front-end customer, and the host displays the corresponding record of the front-end customer on the terminal.

6. (Currently Amended) The answering system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an interactive voice responding device electrically coupled to the data bus and being adapted to store a plurality of records of responding voice messages, each record of ~~one of the~~ responding voice ~~message being~~ messages corresponding to a respective one of the back-end customers, wherein the interactive voice responding device is able to play a corresponding one of the records of responding voice messages based on the back-end customer to which the call ~~being~~ ~~corresponding~~ corresponds before connecting the call from the exchange to the terminal.

7. (Canceled)